

HENRY AND ELIZA



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April 27th
'89.



HENRY AND ELIZA.



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HISTORY

OF

HENRY AND ELIZA

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HENRY AND ELIZA.

INTRODUCTION.

My young readers, I am going to tell you some anecdotes, which, I am sure, you will be very much pleased to hear, concerning little Henry and his sister Eliza, two very good and amiable little children ; and, perhaps, these anecdotes may make you wish and try to be like them. If you were to hear of a good boy, who was such a diligent and successful scholar, that his teacher loved him, and that every person who knew him praised him, you would wish to see that boy, and you would wish to know how he acted, that you might do as he had done, and be loved and praised also. Or, if you were to hear of a boy who was so obedient and affectionate to his father and mother, that they loved him very much, and gave him a great many good things ; you would wish to

know how that little boy conducted himself, that you might imitate his example, and be loved more and more by your father and mother also. If you did so, you would find it to be much more valuable to you every way, and much more pleasing to your little hearts than all the praises of your young foolish companions. Your parents are much wiser than you are, and know, much better than you do, what is really good and what is hurtful to you; when they are keeping you from some things that you would wish to do, and directing you to others that you are not fond of, they are not keeping you from happiness, as you may perhaps think, or as your little thoughtless companions would tell you—they are directing you in the very way to happiness, and honour, and perhaps riches too. For you, then, to please your pious parents, and to gain their love and esteem by your fear of God, is the very way to happiness, and to every thing that is desirable. But you know that the great God who made all things, is your heavenly Father. He is every where present, and sees all your actions, and is either pleased or displeased with every thought of your hearts, and every word that you speak, and every thing that you do; and you ought always to keep this in mind, that God will never forget any thing. You sometimes flatter yourselves that your parents will forget the evil which you have done, and therefore will not punish you for it. But God will never forget any thing; all, all will be kept in mind, and will be brought forward, either in your favour or against you, at the day of judgment. I shall insert a beautiful little hymn upon this subject

which I hope you will commit to memory, and think seriously what it contains:—

‘ THOU GOD SEEST ME.’

‘ I’m not too young for God to see,
He knows my name, and nature too ;
And all day long He looks at me,
And sees my actions through and through.

‘ He listens to the words I say,
And knows the thoughts I have within
And whether I’m at work or play,
He’s sure to see me if I sin.

‘ O ! how could children tell a lie,
Or cheat in play, or steal, or fight,
If they remembered God was by.
And had them always in his sight !

If some good minister is near,
It makes us careful what we do ;
And how much more we ought to fear
The Lord who sees us through and through.

‘ Then when I want to do amiss,
However pleasant it may be,
I’ll always try to think of this,
I’m not too young for God to see.’

The love of your papa and mamma, and of your teacher, will soon come to an end. They may soon be carried off from you by death, or you may be removed far from them in the way of business, which will prevent

you from reaping the advantages of their love and affection; or you yourself may be brought to a premature death; but if you obtain the love of your heavenly Father, it will remain with you for ever. Death cannot abate either your love to him or his love to you. When your soul is released from the body it will rise to a perfection of which you cannot have at present any adequate idea; and all the heavenly principles which are implanted in your soul by the Holy Spirit, of which your love to God is one, will be expanded and exercised during the endless ages of eternity.

Henry and Eliza were very good children, and wished very much to know, not only what would please their papa and mamma, but also what would please their Father who is in heaven. They were not without faults, and some of them I shall set before you, in order that you may avoid them; but they had many excellencies, which I hope you, my little reader, will endeavour to imitate. When Henry and Eliza were not certain whether some things they would wish to do were right or wrong, they were not like some forward and foolish children who would do them at any rate; they would run to their papa or mamma, and make particular inquiries about them. They thus avoided many scrapes into which thoughtless children often fall; enlarged greatly their knowledge; and escaped much grief and perplexity which they would otherwise have brought upon themselves. What led them to such proper behaviour at this early age, was not only the fear of offending their papa and mamma, but the fear of

offending that Divine Being who cannot look upon sin
but with displeasure, and who loves them that love Him.

' O happy is the man who hears
Instruction's warning voice ;
And who celestial wisdom makes
His early, only choice.

' She guides the young with innocence,
In pleasure's paths to tread,
A crown of glory she bestows
Upon the hoary head.

According as her labours rise,
So her rewards increase ;
Her ways are ways of pleasantness.
And all her paths are peace.'



CHAPTER I.

'Tis granted, and no plainer truth appears,
Our most important are our earliest years :
The mind, impressible and soft, with ease
Imbibes and copies what she hears and sees ;
And through life's labyrinth holds fast the clue
That education gives her, false or true.'—COWPER.

I SHALL introduce to you, my dear young friends, first, little Henry, and then his sister. Henry was, from his infancy, a very affectionate boy to his parents, as all little children ought to be. When his papa and mamma were from home, however good the servants were to him, he was very dull, and thought the house very dreary. As soon as he saw them coming along the avenue, he would run to meet them, and, clasping his little arms round his papa's knees, would say, 'O papa, I love you very dearly ;' then run round to his mamma, take her by the hand, and jump and dance by her side all the way home. Their return made him as happy as if he had got a fortune. They never brought home any toys or sweetmeats to him, and he never wished for any. Henry was happier to see his parents than some children are to get sweetmeats from them. Now, although Henry's father did not think it proper to indulge him

with sweetmeats, which are often hurtful to the health of children, he did not forget frequently to bring home with him some good little book to Henry, which he read with care after he and his brother Alexander came from school, and gave his papa an account of it after dinner. By this means he and Alexander collected a library of valuable little books, and what is of more value, a great deal of useful knowledge. This was a great comfort to their own minds, and afforded them subjects of conversation with other good children. A book which is called the Spectator, says, ‘That there is certainly not a more sensible pleasure to a good-natured man, than if he can gratify or inform the mind of another. This carries its own reward along with it, for when you improve another you improve yourself.’

Henry’s father very frequently thought, before-hand, on the various circumstances in which his child would be placed; and told him the dangers that lay in his way —what things he ought to avoid, and what he ought to do, even among his little school-fellows; and told him also the reasons of all these things, that he might be convinced of the impropriety of the one, and the propriety of the other. Henry was very attentive to what his papa said to him, and therefore did not commit so many faults as some other children commit through ignorance, or want of care on the part of their parents. By this means he avoided many punishments, and much grief and vexation of mind, which other children have to bear in consequence of disobedience to their parents. This gave him a great cheerfulness of disposition, which was a comfort to himself, and a pleasure to those around him.

If at any time he committed a fault, his papa did not punish him for it in the first instance, but told him ‘he

evil of it, and warned him against a similar offence in future.

Henry was, in general, very attentive to the commands which were laid upon him, but, like other children, he sometimes forgot what he was forbidden and what he was commanded, particularly when he was at play with other children. This very much displeased his papa, and sometimes made him punish Henry, not that he wished to make him cry or to give him pain, but to keep him from greater faults and greater troubles, and punishments in time to come. He knew well that the disgrace and ruin of many young people is more to be traced to the undue lenity of their parents—‘That he that spareth the rod hateth the child, but that he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes.’

Henry, and his brothers and sisters, had each a little garden assigned them by their papa, and fenced round with dwarf box, which never grows very high or unshapely. Each of them had a little spade, a rake, and a trowel: with these they dressed their gardens, and planted their flowers, and tied up the tall ones to little poles, that they might not be broken by the wind. Each of them displayed their taste in the choice of their flowers and the arrangement of their gardens; and many of their little companions, and even grown-up people, were highly pleased with their management. These little gardens were not only a source of amusement to them, but also a bond of affection towards one another. There was, indeed, a division of property, but there was something like a common stock of goods. If one obtained a flower which another had not, as soon as it could spare a slip or two, they were taken off and distributed; and the old flower was the more healthy and pretty for want of them. This made each one re-

joice in the flourishing state of his brother's garden as well as in his own. As Henry and Alexander were the strongest, they dressed the gardens of their younger brother and sister. It was pleasant to see them advising the little ones to allow them to dress their gardens in this or that way ; and the little ones cheerfully complying from a sense of their own inability.

Watchful is the eye of an affectionate parent towards the health and the happiness of his child. There is nothing more apt to bring bad health upon young people than cold and damp feet in harvest and winter ; therefore when the cold and damp weather, in the end of autumn came on, Henry's papa told him that it was improper that he should work more in his garden till spring should return. And, as he gave no command without assigning a reason for it, he informed him, that, except raking off decayed leaves, no person did any thing to a flower garden during winter ; and, besides, it would be injurious to his health.

Henry obeyed this command for a day or two ; but when he saw his garden all dashed with the rain, he one morning dug and raked it all over, to make it neat and pretty, and when he came in to breakfast, his feet were covered with mud. His papa reminded him of his former injunctions, and of the reasons for them, with an assurance that, if he transgressed again, he would be very much displeased with him, and punish him for his disobedience.

Henry recollect ed his papa's injunctions for a few days ; but the fear of a parent's displeasure and of punishment wore off, and he came in another day, his feet wet as before. His papa was very much grieved to think that his child would deliberately disobey his commands a third time. He asked him if he had for-

gotten his commands, and the reasons he had given him? He then showed him the nature of his fault, and the shame, disgrace, and misery, that frequently follow disobedience. Henry had nothing to say on his own behalf; he was too ingenuous and upright to frame any excuse for himself; and he knew that his papa was so firm to his word, that it was in vain to beg his pardon a second time for the same fault. He remained silent; and wished he had obeyed his father. Ah! little do the young, and old people too, at times, think what evil they are bringing upon themselves, by thoughtlessness, and by a momentary gratification, which does not benefit them even for the present. The very use of reason is to enable mankind to discern what is right and what is wrong, and to choose the one and refuse the other. For a person to know what is right and to do what is wrong, is to degrade himself below the beasts of the field; for they act up to the powers that are given them—they will not willingly do any thing to hurt themselves; but whatever present advantage old or young may think they derive from doing what is wrong, it is sure, ultimately, and perhaps very soon, to hurt themselves.

Henry's papa very seldom inflicted stripes, neither did he repeat the same punishment often. He found that a new punishment, though slighter, had a better effect than an old one though more severe. The punishment to be inflicted on Henry for the offence mentioned above, was to be sent to the nursery, and have no dinner till the rest of the family had dined, while his brothers and sisters remained with their papa and mamma in the dining room. Henry had a superior mind—he very seldom wept. When any punishment was inflicted upon him, he was so convinced of the justice of it, that he

made no complaint. He did not become sulky and stubborn as some bad children do: no, he immediately determined to gain the favour he had lost by his future good behaviour. He was sent to the nursery. In a very affectionate manner he went and paid the most marked attention to a little brother of three years of age. The very language of his countenance was, ‘ Well, I will do what I can to atone for my fault, and recommend myself to papa, and will never transgress in the same way again.’

His mamma was prudent enough to follow up her husband’s injunctions by the firmness of her conduct and her authority. The children in this family did not meet with an asylum in the bosom of one parent to screen them from the authority of the other. Those parents thought as with one heart, spoke as with one voice, and acted as with one hand.

When his mamma went to the nursery and found Henry composed, and not at all disconcerted, she for a moment misunderstood his feelings and the reasons of his conduct: she thought that he was obstinate, careless, and indifferent. ‘ I am afraid,’ said she, ‘ Henry, that you are not sensible of the evil of your conduct, nor sorry on account of it.’ ‘ I am indeed,’ said he, ‘ mamma, very sorry that I have disobeyed papa’s commands; but I know it would do no good to weep, and I will endeavour never to disobey papa again.’ She now pointed out to him the propriety and the advantage of strictly observing all that his papa enjoined him.

Mr Goodlet was very attentive to the religious instruction of his servants and children, and particularly on the Sabbath-day. But it was his aim to give religion, as little as possible, the appearance of a task. He felt the comforts of it himself, and he wished to

make it appear in its native simplicity, and in its heavenly and engaging aspect to others. The exercises for the children on the Sabbath, during the intervals of public worship, and when at home from the church, were to read a portion of Scripture, and of little pious books, and give an account of what they recollect of them in the evening. When these exercises were over, their papa conversed with them upon what they had given an account of, and encouraged them to ask such questions for their information as occurred to them. These exercises afforded some of the most pleasant and profitable hours, both to the parents and the children. It gave scope to their young minds to speak upon the great truths of the gospel, and afforded an opportunity of conveying to them the most valuable information as to the influence which the gospel ought to have upon their hearts and their conduct.

Mr Goodlet was convinced of the utility of young people committing to memory the catechisms, and some of the psalms and hymns, and consequently he prescribed weekly a portion of these to his children; but that the Sabbath and the exercises of it might be made a delight, he took an account of these more laborious exercises on some evening during the week.

When Henry was about seven years of age, his task, for one of these evenings, was two questions of the Assembly's Catechism, with the proofs from Scripture, and some verses of a psalm or hymn. All these were required to be repeated in the most accurate manner by an appointed hour; and, if they were not got, some dishonour was affixed in proportion to the neglect.

One week, Henry had neglected his task, and could not repeat it even upon a second trial. After some

more time had been given him, he repeated it on the third trial; but he had incurred the penalty, and it was to be inflicted. Henry could not perceive the justice of inflicting the penalty when he had got his task at last. His papa told him that he had incurred the penalty at the first failure, though he had got his task afterwards. This however, did not convince Henry; and he thought it exceedingly hard, and wept bitterly at the thought of disgrace. He went to his mamma to make his complaint, but she informed him that his papa was perfectly just, since he had not got his task at the appointed hour—that the second and third trials that his papa gave him were merely out of goodness, and an unwearyed regard to his spiritual instruction—and that, instead of the first penalty, he had incurred more by giving his papa so much trouble and grief by his negligence.

Henry, finding the same decision given by his mamma, and enforced by more arguments, now saw he was wrong, and candidly acknowledged it; and, like an obedient child, immediately thought of making some reparation, and of recovering the favour which he had lost. He said, I will learn other two questions for papa, and perhaps he will forgive me; but when he looked at the questions, they seemed too difficult a task, and his heart almost failed him. His mamma seeing this, said, you had better learn three verses of some pretty hymn, and perhaps you may obtain pardon for this time. I will point out one to you. This one did not please him; and he said he would find one for himself. He retired immediately, and, in a very little time, committed three verses to memory most accurately. He then went to his papa's room, and, with an air of sorrow, and yet of hope, said, O papa, if you will forgive me this once, I will never, never neglect my questions again; and I

have learned three verses of a hymn, will you be so good as accept of them as some atonement for my fault?

His papa, seeing now this disposition, cheerfully agreed to forgive him, before he knew what his verses were. This was looked upon by little Henry as a double favour; that his dear papa had forgiven him, and had done it independent of the recompense which he had provided. He then, with a lightened heart, and cheerful countenance, repeated the following verses with great feeling :—

‘ I’ll go, and, with a mourning voice,
Fall down before his face :
Father ! I’ve sinn’d ’gainst Heaven and Thee,
Nor can deserve thy grace

‘ He said, and hastened to his home,
To seek his father’s love ;
The father sees him from afar,
And all his bowels move.

‘ He ran, and fell upon his neck,
Embraced and kissed his son :
The grieving prodigal bewail’d
The follies he had done.’

The sentiments contained in the verses, the evident correspondence of the child’s feelings with them, and the accuracy and composure with which he repeated them, could not fail to make a deep impression on a parent’s heart. He was very glad that he had pardoned Henry, and had received him into favour before he had heard the verses. Had he not done this till afterwards, Henry would have looked upon his pardon as purchased, and his papa as a hard master. By the way in which it was given, it appeared gratuitous, and connected with the proper feelings of his own mind ; and his papa

appeared merciful, loving, and affectionate. Their hearts were united again by additional ties.

It was pleasant to see with what cheerfulness these young people came on the Sabbath evenings to give an account of what they had read and what they had heard. They came with as much cheerfulness to these exercises, as some children go to play. After they were a little grown up, they were examined as to the meaning of a few questions of some of the catechisms—the meaning of a few verses of Scripture which were prescribed to them the Sabbath evening before—then they gave an account of what they recollect of the discourses they had heard in the church, and of the pious books which they had read in the morning and evening. All this, and the answering of the questions which they had to prepare, would sometimes occupy two hours; and they were quite vigilant and interested the whole time.

The teacher, under whose tuition Henry was placed, very carefully suppressed all lying and swearing among his scholars, as far as his authority went. But some of the children, who were not prohibited from these bad practices by their parents, ventured to say bad words when out of school. Henry, for a time, could not allow himself to pronounce some of the words which they uttered. By hearing them frequently, however, his fear and aversion gradually wore off; and he began to think that some of these words looked pretty, and gave an air of boldness and authority to those who used them. He ventured upon them, also, when at play with his brother. He did not dare, however, to do so for a time, in the hearing of any of the servants, and far less before his papa and mamma. In the course of time, he became more and more fearless in uttering his naughty words, till at length he did so in the hearing of the ser-

rents. They did not wish to tell his parents; but his elder sister, then about ten years of age, one day overheard him. She would gladly have concealed it, to save herself the pain of informing on him, and to save him the pain of correction; but her grief at such words, and her faithfulness, both to her parents and to her brother, would not allow her to conceal the matter. She said, ‘Mamma, I do not like to tell tales, but I cannot conceal this from you. I heard Henry say very bad words, and John told me that he also has heard Henry saying such words several times.’

Mr Goodlet was not at home, but Henry was called to speak to his mamma, and questioned seriously, in the presence of his sister, if the information was true. Henry did not attempt to deny it. His good mamma was truly sorry for him. ‘What!’ says she, ‘Henry Goodlet to say such words! What would your papa say, if he knew of this? But what does God think of it, who really knows it?’ Henry burst into tears, and said, ‘I am sorry, mamma, that I have been so wicked—I will never do so again.’ ‘Sorry, Henry! I am afraid you are only ashamed and grieved that you have been detected. There is a great difference, my dear, between shame in the sight of men, and true sorrow of heart in the sight of God. But observe, Henry, what God says by the prophet Jeremiah—“Because of swearing, the land mourneth.” God sometimes brings judgments upon a whole country for the sin of profane swearing. By the prophet Zechariah, also, it is said, “Every one that sweareth shall be cut off.” Some profane swearers are cut off by a sudden and awful death. But Henry, my dear, I have here a little tract, called *The Swearer’s Prayer, or, The Oath Explained*—read that.’ I shall take the liberty of inserting it here, and perhaps, by the

blessing of God, it may have the same happy effect on some other young thoughtless creatures, that it had on Henry Goodlet :—

‘ What is it, thinkest thou, swearer, that thou dost call for, when the awful imprecations, damn and damnation, roll so frequently from thy profane tongue ? Tremble, swearer, while I tell thee thy prayer containeth two parts : Thou prayest *first*, That thou mayest be deprived of eternal happiness ; *Secondly*, That thou mayest be plunged into eternal misery.

‘ When, therefore, thou callest for damnation, dost thou not, in effect, say as follows ?—O God ! thou hast power to punish me in hell for ever, therefore, let not one of my sins be forgiven ! Let every oath that I have sworn—every lie that I have told—every Sabbath that I have broken, and all the sins that I have committed, in thought, word, or deed, rise up in judgment against me, and eternally condemn me ! Let me never partake of thy salvation ! May my soul and body be deprived of all happiness, both in this world and that which is to come ! Let me never see thy face in comfort—never enjoy thy favour and friendship ; and let me never enter into the kingdom of heaven !

‘ This is the first part of thy prayer, let us hear the second :

‘ O God ! let me not only be shut out of heaven, but also shut up in hell ! May all the members of my body be tortured with inconceivable agony, and all the powers of my soul tormented with horror and despair inexpressible and eternal ! Let my dwelling be in the blackness of darkness, and my companions be accursed men, and accursed devils ! Pour down thy hottest anger ; execute all thy wrath and curses upon me ; arm and send forth all thy terrors against me ; and let thy

fury—thy fearful indignation; rest upon me! Be thou my eternal enemy and plague, and punish and torment me in hell for ever and ever!

‘Swearer, this is thy prayer. O dreadful imprecation! O most horrible! O blaspheming creature! dost thou like thy petition? Look at it when put in print. Think of its nature and consequences. Art thou sincere in thy prayer? dost thou really wish for damnation? Art thou desirous of eternal torment? If so, swear on, swear hard; the more oaths the more misery, and, perhaps, the sooner thou shalt be in hell. Or art thou now shocked at this language? Does it harrow up thy soul? Does thy very blood run cold in thy veins? Art thou convinced of the evil of profane swearing? How many times hast thou blasphemed the God of heaven? How many times hast thou asked God to damn thee in the course of a year—a month—a day? Nay, how many times in a single hour hast thou called for damnation, yet God has spared thee? thou art yet in the land of the living, and in the place of hope. Wonder, O heavens, and be astonished, O earth, at the goodness and the long suffering of that God whose great name swearing persons so often and so awfully profane.

‘Swearer, be thankful, O be exceedingly thankful, that God has not answered thy prayer—thy tremendous prayer. O be thankful that his mercy and patience have withholden the request of thy polluted lips. Never, O never, let him hear another oath from thy unhallowed tongue, lest it should be thy last expression upon earth; and lest thy swearing prayer should be answered in hell. O let these oaths be exchanged for supplications, penitent supplications, for mercy, pardon, and peace! Repent, and turn to Jesus, who died for swearers as well as murderers. And then. O then, though thou mayest

have sworn as many oaths as there are hairs on thine head, thou shalt find, to thine eternal joy, that there is love enough in his heart, and merit sufficient in his atonement, to pardon thy sins, to purify thy soul, and save it for ever. Swearer, canst thou ever again blaspheme such a God and Saviour as this? Does not thy conscience cry—May the God of mercy and grace prevent it. Even so, Amen.'

Before little Henry had read to the end of this, he was sobbing aloud, and could not articulate the words. But he said, 'Mamma, you have told me that if we repent of our sins, God will forgive us; do you think God will forgive me for this?' 'O yes! my child, if you are truly sorry for it, and pray earnestly to God to keep you from it in future.' 'O yes, mamma, I am truly sorry for my sin. I have been a foolish, wicked child; I will not wait till my evening prayer; I will pray just now to God to forgive me.' Henry had hitherto only said prayers which he had learned from books, with some few words of his own; but at this time he kneeled down in the presence of his mamma and his sister, and prayed in words wholly his own. His words, no doubt, were not so well arranged as if he had been older; but the matter was good, and displayed the strong feelings of his mind. His mamma looked at him with astonishment, and, you may rest assured, sent up her earnest prayers in his behalf to the throne of grace.

O ye mothers! I would gladly have said affectionate mothers—but affectionate sure you cannot be, who listen with pleasure to your little infants lisping oaths perhaps against yourselves; against yourselves they certainly are, whether they be directed to you or not. What is it you are pleased with and are encouraging? Those first words of your children's lips offered in blas-

phemy against God and against you! They are as yet ignorant of what they are doing, but you are not. Oh! as you value the comfort of your own souls, and the salvation of your dear children, instead of encouraging them in evil, however clever they may be in it, curb it in the bud. ‘Train up a child in the way he should go;’ (here is the command of God, and his promise is), ‘when he is old he will not depart from it.’ To return to our narrative.

When Henry rose from his knees, he was composed and cheerful. He said, ‘Mamma, I am glad that Eliza told you; and that you have pointed out the evil of my conduct. I hope God has forgiven me for Christ’s sake, and will assist me in keeping from such sins in time to come.’

His sister then proposed that they should not tell papa of all this. ‘Ah!’ says Henry, ‘I will not hide it from papa. I will tell him myself, as soon as he comes home.’ He did so in a very serious manner; the impression was not effaced from his mind. ‘But,’ said he, ‘I have prayed to God, and I hope He has forgiven me, and received me into favour.’

His papa approved of his repentance; informed him more fully of the nature of repentance; and encouraged him to be upon his guard against everything that he knew to be sinful in time to come. He reminded him also, that pardon was to be expected, not on account of his repentance and his prayers, but through the atonement and the intercession of Christ Jesus, who put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

‘Bridegroom of souls, how rich thy love!
How generous, how divine!
Our inmost hearts it well may move,
While thus our voices join.

Deformed and wretched once we lay,
Worthy thy hate and scorn ;
Yet love like thine could find a way
To rescue and adorn.

'Thou art our ransom—from thy veins
A wondrous fountain flows,
To wash our hearts from all their stains,
And heal our deepest woes.'

We might greatly enlarge upon the baneful influence of bad example, and the incalculable advantages of guarding children from the very appearance of evil, and doing it in a proper manner. In correcting faults, the evil of the sin ought always to be pointed out, and the injunctions enforced as much as possible from the word of God. Happily in our land the word of God has an authority and influence on most people which no other book has, and which no human precept can have. But, as what I am writing is intended chiefly for children, I shall not enlarge upon this here.

Henry was very gentle in his temper, and cheerful in his disposition. He was possessed of very fine feelings, had read a great many good books, and could tell a good deal of what they contained. He was therefore loved by all well-disposed children who knew him. There was a widow's only son in this neighbourhood, an amiable little boy who had been a school-fellow of Henry's. That little boy was long confined by a complaint in his knee; and, of all his companions, there was none he liked so much to be with him as Henry Goodlet. Henry was so ingenious in finding out new amusements, without being noisy, that his poor little companion was quite happy with him. Henry was also careful to take his books to lend to this boy, which proved a source of pleasure and improvement to them both. They had more

pleasure in conversing about the history of Joseph, and of Samuel, and of some little pieces of pious biography than foolish children have in their riotous sports.

- ‘ Great God, with wonder and with praise,
On all thy works I look ;
But still thy wisdom, power, and grace,
Shine brightest in thy book.
- ‘ The stars that in their courses roll,
Have much instruction given ;
But thy good word informs my soul
How I may cling to Heaven.
- ‘ The fields provide me food, and show
The goodness of the Lord ;
But fruits of life and glory grow
In thy most holy word.
- ‘ Here are my choicest treasures hid,
Here my best comfort lies ;
Here my desires are satisfied ;
And here my hopes arise.
- ‘ Here would I learn how Christ has died,
To save my soul from hell ;
Not all the books on earth beside,
Such heavenly wonders tell ;
- ‘ Then let me love my Bible more,
And take a fresh delight,
By day to read thy wonders o'er,
And meditate by night.’

They cheerfully communicated all their secrets to one another ; but mutually maintained the strictest fidelity in not revealing each other's secret to any other person. Henry one day expressed to his papa his detestation of a boy who had told the secret of another and laughed at it ; and, with a sense of honour, said, ‘ I have never told any of James Blackwood's secrets, and he has never told any of mine.’

Henry took great delight in the praises of God. He thus expressed himself on the subject. ‘Papa, when you are reading the verses of the psalm, in the morning or evening, or when the minister is reading what is to be sung in the church, I count the verses : I would wish that you and he would read a whole psalm instead of a few verses, that I might have the pleasure of praising God longer ; I like it so much.’

The minister of the church where this family attended divine worship, was very attentive to the spiritual instruction of children, and very frequently addressed them in particular, when his subject afforded an opportunity of doing so ; sometimes in the evening he appropriated a whole sermon to children. On one of these occasions, he had been very happy in the simplicity and earnestness of his address. The children’s attention was arrested, and they felt themselves interested in the subject. When they returned from church, little Henry was quite overjoyed. He said, ‘Mamma, I never was happier than to-night. I wish the minister would always preach in the way he has done this evening.’

There was nothing in which Henry took greater delight than in reading good books. When he came home from school, he would have read for hours to his mamma when his brother was playing with other boys. He asked the meaning of what he did not understand, and expressed his thoughts and feelings upon such parts of the book as most interested him. It was pleasing to see a healthy little boy eagerly reading to his mamma, and entering into the spirit of it, when other children were roaming abroad.

Whether his mamma was present or not, he never neglected prayer morning nor evening ; and he did not hurry it over as a task. He considered himself in the

immediate presence, and under the eye, of the Almighty.

What is said of the merciful man is applicable also to the merciful child ; he is merciful to his beast. Henry uniformly displayed this feeling towards the little animals that were about him. He had been taught by his parents that it was sinful, and had a bad effect upon his own feelings, to hurt any thing that had life, or could feel pain. Under this impression, he did not kill flies and other little insects, as some hard-hearted children do.

Henry had a pretty cat, of which he was very fond. This cat brought him three or four kittens at a litter. Henry danced with joy to think that he had got such an increase to his stock ; but he was struck with astonishment to hear his mamma say, that they must all be drowned, as the servants could not be troubled with them. He could not believe that his mamma, who was so tender to all other animals, should have no sympathy for his poor little kittens. When they were a few days old, he brought them all in a basket to his mamma's room to let her see how pretty and marled they were, thinking that the sight of them could not fail to operate on her feelings in their behalf. 'O, mamma, you cannot think of drowning these pretty little innocent creatures. If you will allow them to be kept till they can eat for themselves, I will give them to some one who will take care of them and keep them.' When he could not prevail on behalf of the whole, he pleaded hard that at least one of them should be allowed to be kept. This was granted to him ; and he selected the most beautiful one. When John was to drown them, he remained in the house, and refused to see him take them away ; and he could not look on John, but with

aversion, for a considerable time afterwards. He said, he must be a very cruel man that could drown my kittens, that had never done him any harm.

Henry found a bird's nest in the shrubbery ; and, though he often visited it, he was very tender toward both the bird and her nest. Some person had told him, that if he disturbed the bird, or touched her eggs, she would forsake her nest. For this reason, though his curiosity was great, he kept at a distance. Henry, however, told his brother, Alexander, of his pretty bird and her nest. Alexander was a fine, open-hearted, generous little fellow, but not possessed of such fine feelings as Henry. Alexander told another school-fellow of this treasure, and they threatened one day to rob Henry of it entirely. When Henry returned from school, he ran to his papa's room in great grief, and told him that Alexander and Dick Wildman had threatened to rob his nest. His papa soon comforted him, and set his mind at rest upon this subject, by telling him that he would not allow them to act such a cruel part. Henry went away more joyful than if his papa had given him a very valuable treasure.

Something, however, had offended his bird, and she forsook her nest. Henry found in the morning that she was not there ; he visited the spot occasionally during the day, but she was not to be seen. He flattered himself that she would return in the evening, but she never returned. His papa told him that he would know if she had forsaken her nest, by feeling if the eggs were cold. He would not allow them to be touched during the whole of the next day, but when the bird returned not by the evening, he allowed his brother to feel the eggs. He then went and told his papa that the eggs were very cold. He then thought of bringing them into

the house, and putting them to the fire ; but he was told that, since they had been so long cold, the birds would not come out.

He said, ‘ Well, it is perhaps better as it is ; the bird may be gone to build another nest on the top of some high tree, where, though I cannot see her, she will not be disturbed, and will bring out other birds in peace.’ This was quite in Henry’s way. He always found some alleviation of every evil. Hope, so fertile in its resources, and so powerful in its aid, never failed to afford him assistance, and to suggest to him something comfortable.

At one time, Henry’s cat carried off Alexander’s tame bird, and would very soon have devoured it. Alexander could do nothing but stand and weep ; he had no hope of its recovery. But Henry, who was present at the moment, went after the cat with all speed, overtook her in the stable, caught hold of her, and rescued Alexander’s bird alive and unhurt. Never did a victorious general return with more proud elevation of mind from the field of battle, than Henry did with this trophy of his victory. Before he entered the parlour, he cried, ‘ Do not weep, Alexander ; here is your bird alive and safe.’ Gladness beamed through Alexander’s tears. When he saw his bird, with his native generosity he said, ‘ Well, Henry, the bird is yours. But how did you rescue it from that wicked cat ? ’ Then, to compare small things with great, the circumstances of this savage capture, and of the deliverance of the poor helpless captive, were all related with little less interest than the circumstances of the Duke of Wellington’s victory at Waterloo.

When the missionary sermon was preached in the neighbourhood, Henry and Alexander had, each of them, only one shilling. They requested their papa to allow

them to give it to the collection, to aid in the sending of the gospel to the poor negroes. They regretted that they had not more to give. ‘But,’ Henry said, ‘if I could find a poor negro, I would give him my old Bible—I would tell him that it does indeed want a few leaves, but that he would nevertheless find much in it about Christ and salvation.’

‘Do not I love Thee, O my Lord?
Behold my heart and see;
And turn each sinful idol out
That dares to rival Thee.

‘Hast Thou a lamb in all thy flock,
I would disdain to feed?
Hast Thou a foe, before whose face
I fear thy cause to plead?

‘Would not mine ardent spirit vie
With angels round the throne,
To execute thy sacred will,
And make thy glory known?

CHAPTER II.

' Listen, Eternal Wisdom cries,
Ye children, and be wise :
Happy the man that keeps my ways ;
The man that shuns them dies.'

Where dubious paths perplex the mind,
Direction I afford :
Life shall be his that follows me,
And favour from the Lord.'

ELIZA was possessed of very fine feelings, and the keenest sensibility. The following circumstances tended to discover these at a very early period of her life. The worship of God was kept up in this family ; the praises of God were sung ; a portion of his word read, as well as prayer offered up to him. As soon as Eliza was capable of listening to sounds, when the praises of God began, she would listen attentively. If the tune was cheerful, her countenance assumed a smile, and she seemed delighted ; but, if the tune was plaintive, it so affected her tender nerves, that she wept. Though she was asleep, if a plaintive tune was sung in the room where she was, she used to awake crying. It was long before she could listen to a plaintive tune without shedding tears.

She was also a very affectionate and dutiful child. Her great aim was to please her papa and mamma, and

meet with their approbation. When she was sent to school, she was very attentive to her lessons, carefully prepared them at home, and very soon surpassed the children of her own age. Such was her prudence, sagacity, and steadiness, that she became a pattern to her school-fellows, and was spoken of with the highest approbation by those who knew her. It is very easy to suppose, that this proved a source of very great pleasure, both to her parents and her teachers. Do not think, however, my young reader, that this little scholar was so far above you, that it is in vain for you to attempt to imitate her. She had faults as well as you. And I shall mention some of them.

When Eliza was about eight years of age, she, one day, had indulged in folly, trifled, and neglected some injunctions that her papa had given her. He was conscious that these injunctions were both important and reasonable; and that Eliza, with a very ordinary share of attention, could easily have fulfilled them. He therefore manifested some displeasure towards her. This he very seldom had occasion to do, and therefore she felt it the more keenly. She found herself in a very disagreeable situation—she knew she had transgressed, and she had no excuse to plead. She was too sensible of fault to beg pardon, but both her eyes and her heart powerfully solicited it. Her papa desired her to leave the room, and this was more difficult to bear than any punishment. After considering for a little what she should do, or what she should say, she summoned up courage to return to her papa. Ah! whither should a child go in any distress, but to a parent? There is a softness in his hand that lightens the very punishment it inflicts.

And if we have such encouragement to fly to the arms

of an earthly parent in our perplexities, inexpressibly more powerful are the inducements that ought to excite us to fly to our Heavenly Father in our distress. We have a beautiful instance of this in the conduct of David, the pious King of Israel, when he had sinned against the Lord! The prophet was commanded of God to give him a choice of some one of three punishments—seven years' famine in his land—or to flee three months before his enemies, while they pursued him—or that the Lord should send a pestilence upon his people for three days. David, like a humble penitent child, said to the prophet, ‘I am in a great strait; Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord, for his mercies are great, and let me not fall into the hand of man.’

If the loss of an earthly parent's favour occasion such grief and alarm in the mind of a child, so as to render all other enjoyments unavailing, how much more ought the loss of our Heavenly Father's favour to fill us with anxiety. He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and cannot look upon sin. How then can our hands be strong, or our hearts bear up under his frown?

‘ Thus saith Jehovah from his seat,
Who shall presume my wrath to meet ?
What rebel men or angels dare
To wage with me unequal war ?’

Do you wish, young reader, to know how you may obtain peace with the God of heaven? Believe in Christ Jesus who is our peace, and has made peace for us with God, by the blood of his cross. If Eliza sought earnestly the favour of her earthly parent, what innumerably stronger reasons have you to seek the favour of your Father who is in Heaven, through the merits of Christ.

' Come, my dear children, come,
And seek your Father's arms ;
There is your shelter, there your home,
'Midst fears and dire alarms.'

Eliza thus addressed her papa :—' O papa, I know that I have acted very wrong, and that you have just cause to be offended with me. I cannot bear to remain under your displeasure : inflict upon me any punishment you please, I will cheerfully bear it ; I only ask you to be reconciled to me, and that I may enjoy your favour. I will take care that I shall never offend you again in the same way.' This was expressed with such earnestness, penitence, and affection, that the heart must have been hard indeed that would not have been touched with it.

Her papa was very much pleased, both with the disposition which she manifested, and the manner in which she expressed her feelings. He told her that he had been displeased with her on account of her fault, but as she was now sensible of it, and resolved to guard against such conduct in future, he had no hesitation in saying, that he cheerfully forgave her, and was perfectly reconciled to her. That she might be convinced of the return of his affection, he reached forth his hand, brought her near to him and kissed her ; and exhorted her to be a good child. I need not inform you that she went away more comforted, and her mind more cheerful than she had felt for some time.

If you, my young reader, should ever be so unfortunate as to incur your parents' displeasure, see that you act as Eliza did ; and if you do, you have the strongest encouragement that they will forgive you and love you again. Next to the love and favour of God, the love and the affection of your parents is the most valuable

enjoyment you can possess. And if ever you should be so forgetful of what they enjoin you to do, or act so foolishly as to displease them, endeavour to regain their favour without delay. There are some children so obstinate that they will not think of their faults, and so proud that they will not acknowledge them. See, my dear children that you do not act in this manner. There is nothing more amiable than to see a child candidly acknowledge its faults. You need not be afraid that your parents will be more displeased with you than your conduct deserves; it is no pleasure to them to be angry with you. And if you are really penitent, and plead for their pardon as Eliza did, you will be sure to obtain their love and affection again; and I hope you will obtain what is of far greater importance, the pardon of God, and his love and favour. All sin is committed against God, and exposes you to his displeasure and his punishment, which is more dreadful than any punishment which your parents can inflict. It is of no small value to be forgiven by your parents; but it is inexpressibly more valuable to be forgiven by God. And this forgiveness you must seek through that atonement which Christ Jesus has made for the sins of all those who believe in him. Now you will find something more about believing in Christ afterwards in this little book.

Eliza, from a very early period, was very anxious to know all that regarded her salvation and happiness. If, at any time, she did not understand what she had read, or what had been told her, it filled her mind with perplexity, and sometimes kept her from sleep a whole night. In every thing that came under her consideration, whether natural or spiritual, she eagerly inquired into all the causes of it, and the reasons why it was so.

It was the aim of Mr Goodlet never to propose any subject to his children but what he thought their minds capable of understanding. After leading them to some general knowledge of the Divine Being, and of the nature of the dispensations of his providence and grace, he became more particular in his instructions ; pointing out our lost state by nature, our utter inability to do any thing of ourselves to procure the pardon of our sin and acceptance with God ; and therefore the necessity of a Mediator, who should do all for us that the law of God required, and bear the punishment that our sins deserved.

When Eliza was in danger of resting on prayer as the ground of her acceptance with God, and the procuring cause of spiritual blessings, she was informed that our persons and services were accepted of God, only through the imputed righteousness of Christ.

ELIZA.—‘What do you mean by the righteousness of Christ?’

PARENT.—‘When Christ took our nature upon him, He gave perfect obedience to all the laws of God, in our name and on our behalf; and in his sufferings and death He bore that punishment which our sins deserved. All this He did, not on his own account, but on ours. And this constituted a sufficient righteousness, for it was all that the law and the justice of God required.’

ELIZA.—‘What is the meaning of Christ’s righteousness being imputed to us?’

PARENT.—‘If you owed an hundred pounds to any person, and were not able pay it—if some generous person paid it for you, and got you a discharge, the man that received the money would set it down to your ac-

count as if it had been paid by you. This payment, then, would be imputed to you, and accounted yours. In nearly the same manner, that obedience which Christ gave to the law of God, and the satisfaction which He made to divine justice in his sufferings and death, is imputed to us or accounted ours if we believe in him ; and in consequence of this we are accounted righteous by God.'

ELIZA.—‘ But how can God count us righteous and be well pleased with us, if we are sinners, and therefore are not righteous ? ’

PARENT.—‘ This, my child, leads us to another important part of Christ’s work not only on our behalf, but upon ourselves. All who are enabled to believe on him, and have his righteousness imputed to them, are also made righteous. He makes them new creatures ; they are formed again in their minds, after the image of God. Christ Jesus restores to them that holiness which man lost by the fall.’

ELIZA.—‘ What is the meaning of being enabled to believe in Christ ? ’

PARENT.—‘ As sinful creatures, we are neither willing nor able to believe in Christ till some being that has power enough to make us new creatures, give us power and will to do so. None but a divine being can perform this work upon us ; and it is assigned to the Holy Spirit, or third person of the Godhead. And the manner in which He accomplishes it is very clearly set before us in one of the questions of your Shorter Catechism :—

“ ‘ What is effectual calling ? ’ ”

“ ‘ Effectual calling is the work of God’s Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renew-

ing our wills, He doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel."

' Whatever we may know about sin, we are never convinced of the number and the aggravation of our own sins till the Divine Spirit convince us of them. And whatever faint wishes we may have to believe in Christ Jesus, we can never set about it in good earnest till we are persuaded and enabled by the Spirit of God. "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure?"'

ELIZA.—' Then, papa, our reading and our prayers can be of no use if we cannot believe in Christ till the Divine Spirit enable us.'

PARENT.—' They *are* of use, my child, for they are a part of the very means which the Divine Spirit makes use of to enlighten your mind in the knowledge of Christ, and to make you willing and able to receive him. God has appointed the means in order that the end may be obtained. You ought therefore to read with care, and to pray earnestly in hopes of the assistance of the Spirit. For, at the very time that the apostle Paul tells us, that it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do what is good, he tells us that we are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling.—Now, the meaning of that is, that in order to expect the assistance of the Divine Spirit to enable us to will and to do what is well-pleasing to God, we must read the Holy Scriptures with care; we must pray earnestly to God for deliverance from sin, for grace in our hearts, and for the blessings which Christ Jesus bestows on all who believe in him. We should be as earnest in seeking after these things as if we were afraid that we might never obtain them.'

It is very improper to give children a wrong view of

religion; and it is not much less objectionable to give them a partial or an incorrect view of it. For a doctrine may appear very perplexing when stated by itself, and yet would appear not only worthy of God, but comforting to man, when stated in its connection with other doctrines and other parts of the divine procedure towards us.

An old woman in the neighbourhood of this family had told Eliza something about the doctrines of predestination and election; that God had appointed, from all eternity, all those who should be saved; and that none but those could ever get to heaven. This was a new subject to Eliza, and it perplexed her exceedingly; for she thought, though we are ever so attentive in reading—ever so earnest in prayer to God to enable us to believe in Christ Jesus, and deliver us from sin, and make us like unto himself—and though we be ever so careful in abstaining from what we know to be evil, and in doing what is good, if we be not among the elect, these feelings and exercises will avail us nothing. She little thought, and she had not yet been told, that these very feelings and exercises, if genuine, were evidences, and the only decisive evidences, that we are among the elect of God.

She had hitherto found that her papa had answered all her questions, and cleared up her little difficulties; but she had never found anything so perplexing as this. As soon as she could find her papa, she mentioned this difficulty to him, and so great was her consternation, that, before she had related the matter to him, the tears were in her eyes, and her heart was so full that she could not articulate her words.

PAPA.—‘It is, indeed, true, my child, that God has elected his people to eternal life; but He has not told

us who are the elect. He has, however, appointed the means of grace and salvation, and enjoined every one of us to attend to them with diligence.

'Now, it is by our diligent attention to these means that we are to expect salvation, and it is by their suitable influences upon us that we come to know whether we be among the elect or not. Our Lord and Saviour has told us that all who come to him, earnestly seeking salvation, He will in no wise cast out ; that is, He will never refuse them that salvation which they ask. For the encouragement of those who are afraid of sin, and who feel it a burden, He invites them to come to him and He will give them rest. He will deliver them from sin, so that it shall never bring them into condemnation ; and, at last, He will make them feel and know so much of the influences of his grace as will banish their fears and comfort their minds. Now, my child, this is sufficient encouragement for you to look to Christ Jesus for salvation, and an assurance that, if you do as you ought, you shall be saved. It is also a sufficient encouragement for you to pray for the salvation of others.

'Christ Jesus has purchased a salvation sufficient for the very chief of sinners, and He has appointed sufficient means to bring the chief of sinners to this salvation ; and He is setting both this salvation and the means of it before us in his word, and in a preached gospel. And, if sinners go on in the love and practice of sin, and either neglect the means of grace altogether, or attend upon them in a careless manner, can it be thought unjust in God to punish them for their love of sin, their neglect of salvation, and the means of grace ?'

The head of this family scrupulously avoided every

subject, in the instruction of the young people, that he thought they could not, at their age, understand ; but when they did put questions to him, even on such subjects, he thought it improper to evade them, either by giving no answer, or by giving a partial one ; unless when he stated fairly that the subject was such that they could not, at present, understand it.

On one occasion, Eliza thought very seriously on the death of a little brother, and whether or not he and such children should be saved. She asked her papa, if little babies, who died before they were guilty of actual sin, should be punished for the sin of our first parents ? This was a question which he would have evaded, had it not been his general principle mentioned above. His answer was, ‘There are many things, Eliza, concerning the effects of the sin of our first parents upon mankind, and the justice and equity of God’s dealings with us, both before and after the fall, that I doubt you could not fully understand at present ; but if God spares you and me till you grow a little older, I have no doubt but I may explain them to you in such a way as you may understand them. This much I would say at present —The Scriptures do not say any thing against the salvation of those who die very young ; and many good people have entertained hopes that all who die in infancy may be saved, not by their own innocence, but by the blood of Christ, by which all who are saved at any age must be purified.’ Eliza said, ‘O papa ! if the Scriptures say nothing against the salvation of infants, I think it is a duty to believe it.’ The thought seemed to ease her from a load of anxiety.

The rehearsing of what she had read tended much to prepare her for repeating part of the sermons which she heard on the Sabbath. When only about ten years

of age, she would have given a much more full and accurate account, both of the books which she read, and of some of the sermons which she heard, than could have been expected at her period of life. This has a happy effect in fixing the attention of young people, and leading them to understand what they read, and what they hear ; and the understanding, on the other hand, aids the memory, for no person can remember much of what they do not understand.

From the time that Eliza could distinguish between right and wrong, she maintained the strictest regard to truth, not only in what she said to her parents, but even in her conversation among her little companions. The following hymn had a powerful effect on her mind ---

- ‘ O ’tis a lovely thing for youth,
To walk betimes in wisdom’s way ;
To fear a lie, to speak the truth,
That we may trust to all they say.
- ‘ But liars we can never trust,
Though they should speak the thing that’s true ;
And he who does one fault at first,
And lies to hide it, makes it two.
- Have not we known, or heard, or read,
How God abhors deceit and wrong ;
How Ananias was struck dead,
Caught with a lie upon his tongue ?
- ‘ So did his wife Sapphira die,
When she came in and grew so bold,
As to confirm that wicked lie
That just before her husband told.
- ‘ The Lord delights in them that speak
In words of truth ; but every liar
Shall have his portion in the lake
That burns with brimstone and with fire.

' Then let me always watch my lips,
Lest I be struck to death and hell,
Since God a book of reckoning keeps
For every lie that children tell.'

No consideration could make Eliza deviate from truth, even when she knew that her adherence to it would expose herself to severe reprobation or punishment, or when a deviation from it was likely to have been accompanied with some momentary advantage. In fact, she soon found that sincerity of heart was more closely connected with outward advantages than many people think; for, instead of young people avoiding reprobation and punishment by falsehood, they very often incur them when they might have avoided them, and render them more severe when they might have been slighter. She was much more considerate than some children of her age, and therefore her faults were fewer. And as she lamented them when she perceived them, and candidly acknowledged them, there was neither room nor necessity for much reprobation. It was very interesting to perceive her candidly acknowledging a fault which might never have been detected by man. This showed the influence and value of inward principle. It was with God that she, young as she was, considered herself as having to do; and it gave ease to her mind to confess a fault that might otherwise have been concealed.

Though gentle in her dispositions, she was firm in her decisions; and her manner was easy, but not frivolous. These qualifications, accompanied with candour and sincerity, gained her the affection and the confidence of most of her school companions. If at any time her candour and adherence to truth lost her the favour of some of her companions, it was but of short duration; for those very persons, as soon as their displeasure was

over, esteemed her more than if she had degraded herself by telling a falsehood on their account, and thus had voluntarily committed a sin, because they had negligently or wickedly done so. For they knew, that if she would not deviate from truth to screen them on the one hand, she would not frame any falsehood against them to give them uneasiness on the other.

Eliza, owing to the instructions of her mother, was now an excellent needlewoman ; and when she was at home from school, helped her mamma greatly. Eliza was not allowed to be idle, more than was necessary for recreation ; for her mother considered it of the greatest importance for young people to be trained up in habits of economy, diligence, and activity. She wished her daughter to know, as much as possible, the value of her clothes, that she might take more care of them.

The following circumstance tends greatly to show Eliza's filial affection, and her cheerful obedience to her mamma, and pious feelings towards her Heavenly Father. I must relate what led to it. And surely whatever tends to display the amiable feelings of the human heart, and what is of more importance still, the influences of divine grace, must be highly valued by all who are concerned for the glory of God and the salvation of precious souls. And when these are displayed in the character of the young, it may, by the blessing of Heaven, have a salutary influence upon those of their own age. It shows them that religion is not intended for the aged only, but for the young also ; and that much of it is within their reach.

Eliza's mamma had set apart a day to finish a summer bonnet for her. Eliza was invited to a party of young people that evening, to keep the birthday of one of her companions ; and though her mamma stood in

need of her aid to have this little piece of work finished in the time they had prescribed to themselves, she did not wish to give Eliza a moment's grief, by detaining her from this innocent amusement in a pious family. This amiable girl was very sensible of her mamma's goodness to her, and would not have complained though she had kept her at home that evening.

She returned from her party as soon as possible, and helped her mamma till a late hour. The work was not yet finished; but her mamma rose early, and had the bonnet finished for Eliza before she got out of bed. When she entered her mamma's room in the morning, to her surprise and gratification, she found her new bonnet finished. This was the more acceptable to her, as they were to have a party of young people next day, among whom she wished to appear in her best, although she was by no means vain.

Her mamma, who wished to turn every thing into a source of improvement, said: ' You ought, my child, to be very good and obedient, for I have exerted myself last night and this morning for you, till I am quite fatigued.' Eliza's heart was too full to return any answer at the moment. She retired to another room to consider for a little what she wished to say.

When she returned, she thus addressed her mamma: ' I have often wondered, mamma, at your goodness and kindness to me. You are far better to me than I deserve. I cannot make you any recompense just now, but if I live till I grow up, I hope God will enable me to recompense you. And I will do what I can just now—I will pray to God to bless you and keep you from the evils of this world.' This was more than was to have been expected of a child of ten years of age, and had a powerful effect on her mother's feelings.

MAMMA.—‘ O yes, Eliza, you can indeed make me a very great recompense just now. Your present feelings are a greater reward to me than I could expect. The greatest recompense that a parent desires of a child, is, that you behave with propriety towards those who are about you, and that you be diligent and earnest in all the services that God requires at your hand. This will be peculiarly comforting, both to your papa and to me. It will be some evidence that the instructions we have given you, and the prayers which we have offered up on your behalf, have not been in vain. It will lead us to adopt the thanksgiving of David as our own, “ Blessed be God, who hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.” If you seek God, and serve him in sincerity and truth, it will be a pleasure to us while we live, and no small comfort to us when death is approaching. “ My child, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine.”

I have now related to you, my young readers, some anecdotes of the religious and amiable character of these two young people. As far as they are followers of Christ, be ye imitators of them, as dear children. I do not set them before you as examples which you are to follow in all things. Some things which I have related ought to serve as cautions to you against similar faults. But there are others which ought to be encouragements to you in what is pious and amiable. But particularly seek grace from God that you may be rendered holy. Seek his protection to guard you from evil, and his counsel to direct you in the ways that you should choose. Pray earnestly to him to enable you to believe in Christ Jesus, to the saving of your souls. Take this holy word as your guide. For this purpose read it with great care, and pray to God to give you his Holy Spirit to enable

you to understand it, and to follow out what it requires.
‘If you know these things,’ says our Lord and Saviour,
‘happy are ye if ye do them.’

‘In life’s gay morn, when sprightly youth,
With vital ardour glows,
And shines in all the fairest charms
Which beauty can disclose.

‘Deep on thy soul, before its powers
Are yet by vice enslaved,
Be thy Creator’s glorious name
And character engraved.’



THE LAST BELL FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL.



WAS installed in my first parish when still quite a young man.

After a year's probation, however, those among whom I had laboured unanimously chose me as their pastor.

When they informed me of the desire of the congregation, it caused me sincere joy ; for I had learnt to love both the people and the region where they were located ; and my hope having been that, for a time at least, I might be settled in the mountains, my wishes were now fully accomplished.

It was a beautiful spot. In my then fresh and youthful fancy, it seemed as if the choicest glories of nature had been

gathered there ; and I could not but believe that away up so high, surely we must be nearer heaven, nearer God than in the valley below. My genuine enthusiasm was continually fed and quickened. The stillness of the forests, or the incessant rushing of the torrent—the green meadows, and the streams that refreshed them—the bracing morning breeze, or the soft evening air—ever charmed me ; and again and again I would praise my God for His works, as well as for His abundant mercies. Looking at creation and its mysteries with the feeling that its mighty Author was my ‘Father,’ often my heart would overflow with sincere gratitude ; for all in the early training which I had received had tended to develop in me a keen sense of the love of God, as displayed in nature. As I grew up, that impression, far from fading away and disappearing, on the contrary, had become a strong aliment to my filial emotions towards the Almighty. A heart indiffer-

ent to Christ could never attain divine knowledge solely through nature's works ; but one that has been touched by His grace, and has already received Him as a pardoning Saviour, can truly have his adoration increased by the sight of daily and continual wonders.

As I first arrived in the mountain village, I found myself a complete stranger. No one in the place, or neighbourhood, knew me, and for miles around I could not have met one familiar face. Soon, however, I made some warm friends. Much indulgence was shown to me, and more than once I was blessed with the acquaintance of aged Christians, who had charity enough to give profitable counsel to their young minister. The Sunday school, which at my arrival was hardly in existence, under God's blessing, became most flourishing, the dear children appearing to love me and trust me implicitly. Indeed, many of these young faces are engraven on my mind, as the

souls of the little ones were precious to me in the sight of God. One of them I never can forget—one tender little heart which seems to have encircled mine for eternity.

It was in the beginning of March that, on a cold Sunday morning, just as Sunday school was opening, Mary Morgan, a bright, sweet-looking child, seven or eight years old, entered the school-room. She had come alone, and her eager countenance, all flushed and animated, seemed to ask ‘where’ her place was to be among us. I was at my desk, and, taking the cold, small hands in mine, inquired what her name was, and led her next to one of the oldest and best girls in the class, where she could feel as if protected or helped, if need be.

After school I drew the child to my side, telling her I hoped she would come regularly each Sabbath. She said that her father had but just arrived in the place, and that her mother was very glad there was a Sunday school so near, as where she

had lived before, she had always attended the one established there. The language of Mary was peculiarly pleasant and refined, and her whole manner indicated careful and Christian training. I had felt myself drawn towards the little girl. She reminded me of a beautiful baby sister who had died before I left home; and besides this, she was in herself an extremely lovely child. I asked her where she lived, so that I might visit her parents; and calling back two of the children who resided near her, I told them to take good care of Mary, for she was a stranger, and we must teach her to feel at home and happy with us.

Next day I found my way to the '*littlest* brown cottage on the hill,' as Mary had designated her home. It was in the evening, just as John Morgan was returning from the mines, where he had obtained the post of partial inspector.

He was a man of simple manners, but of real culture; and even that first interview

showed me that though his belief was not openly evangelical, he had a sincere desire that his child should be surrounded with Christian influences, ‘as,’ he said, ‘those are the only pure and elevating ones.’ Mrs Morgan had much of her little girl’s appearance, and by her gentle manners, formed a pleasant contrast with the manly bearing of her noble-looking husband.

I was delighted with my new acquaintances, and at once felt as if breathing there a most congenial atmosphere. Soon I became an habitual visitor at the Morgans’, many of my evenings being spent with them, for, to converse with a man like Mary’s father, was a real benefit to me, his fine mind being stored in a rich and healthful way. Little Mary’s attendance at Sunday school was regular. She made herself a general favourite, each of the other children doing their best to help and befriend her in every possible way.

On a Sunday I was installed, and the

Thursday following was fixed upon for a Sunday school festival. We were—myself and several members of my congregation—to escort the children to a grove, where, under the eyes of those of the parents who could come, they were to enjoy themselves—first, with a good repast, and then with as much romping as they chose. The long and somewhat austere addresses which are often added to those festivals I desired to be avoided, as I did not consider them appropriate at such a time and occasion.

We were very happy. All went off beautifully. The day was one of the ‘rare days in June’ immortalized by a New England poet, the atmosphere soft and balmy, the rays of the sun tempered by the breeze, light clouds sailing gracefully in the vast ocean over head, the new foliage contrasting charmingly with that of the pines, while numberless birds filled the air with the maddest notes of their wild joy.

The gay little band hardly knew what to

do in their fresh delight. There were, from all sides, nothing but peals of laughter, and enthusiastic admiration at the plainest butterfly or the simplest blossom. We had been stowed in two large hay-carts, drawn by Farmer Green's stout and sleek greys, known all over the region for their strength and excellent keeping.

After an hour's ride, we reached the grove, in the midst of which a wide natural lawn offered the most available spot for our gathering. The dear little ones, having their appetites sharpened, enjoyed fully their meal. In short, what did they not enjoy? In ecstasies at everything, all transported them with wonder.

One of the most, if not the most contented, was, certainly, my little Mary. Her father had trusted her to my special care, as neither parent had been able to join us, and I felt as if I must not lose sight of her even for an instant; for, though appearing in perfect health, she

had always impressed me as not so robust as the generality of country children. That happy day was a choice one for the dear child. The youngest of the party, she was protected by all; the most boisterous and reckless boy being ready to remain quiet, if need be, for her sake.

As we were coming back, after having concluded our joyful time in the wood by awakening the neighbouring echoes with favourite hymns, I took little Mary on my knee, for she seemed weary. I told her how pleased I was to see her every Sabbath morning at school; and that I noticed this day, that while the older class were leading the singing, she was following each verse very earnestly.

'Mary,' said I, 'tell me what makes you so faithful to Sunday school. Is it to please your father or your mother, or is it to please me, or to please God in heaven?'

Then, coming close to me, the child answered in a way which would have been

remarkable in one of double her years, and which, from her, struck me very much : ‘ It is to please you, sir, and father and mother, and God ; and then, when I hear the bell ring on Sabbath morning, I often think that perhaps it is *the last bell for my Sunday school*, and that I may die before it rings the next time.’

I was taken by surprise, and amazed. For a few minutes I remained silent. Scarcely eight years old, this child was already preoccupied by the thoughts of her departure. I looked at her. The sweet face, however, was serene and joyful ; no trace there of apprehension or regret.

But a sort of chill crept all over me—it seemed as if she was almost sliding out of our hands, and did not belong to us who loved her so well.

We reached home safely. I laid my pet in her father’s arms ; for she had fallen asleep, and he was standing at his door, watching eagerly for our return. As after

that, days and weeks glided smoothly away, bringing Mary to school each Sabbath morning, with roses on her cheeks, and the look of health in her bright eyes, I forgot, if not her words, at least the painful impression they had made upon me.

It was about five weeks later, that one evening, after a day of intense heat, as I was sitting at my window, I saw, coming up the path which led to my cottage home, John Morgan, his head uncovered, and his whole appearance indicating extreme haste and excitement. To my sorrow I learnt that our Mary was sick,—indeed, as it seemed, sick unto death. An attack of the worst nature had seized the child in the morning; from hour to hour she had been growing worse, and my poor friend was in the greatest distress of mind. He begged I should go back with him, as he firmly believed I could do better even than the two doctors he had called already: it might be, he said, that I would suggest what

would relieve the terrible sensation of choking of his darling child. Then it was, as I returned with the afflicted father, that the words of my little friend came back to me most forcibly: what if her ‘Sunday school bell’ had rung for the ‘*last time!*’

The hours which followed were of those that do the havoc of years on the mind. Each minute was swiftly passing away, though to us it seemed as if dragging itself, heavily laden with dread and trembling anxiety. Around the little bed we all watched, hardly breathing, scarcely whispering our impressions, each one of us holding by turns the small burning hand, to find what its throbings betrayed.

At about three o’clock in the morning a curious sensation passed over me. I had the child’s wrist in my hand, when I perceived that the pulsations were getting less frequent: was it the decrease of fever, and was health returning; or, on the contrary, was life ebbing away? I waited—I

watched, watched closer—I noticed that the head on the pillow had ceased tossing, and that the cheeks looked more natural; I would not yet speak to the parents, for fear of awakening a false hope. The fact, however, was now beyond doubt. Praised be God! it was so—the fever was giving way, the breathing was easier, and a sweet smile alighted on Mary's lips as she fell into a gentle sleep.

'John,' whispered I at last, 'my friend, see here; this little one has got over it! see!'

Mary did not die—the Sunday school bell which might have been the last for her, was followed by many, many others; but if it had proved to be so, oh, how glorious for the little lamb to be ready for the call of her Shepherd!

This sickness, which had burst upon us so suddenly, was, in the hands of God, the means of bringing Mary's father to a full and humble acceptance of the salvation which is in Christ. I took occasion of the

emotions thus stirred in his breast, to repeat to him my conversation with his child : he was moved to abundant tears.

From that day John Morgan became a regular attendant at church, and many a time after service, when meeting me at the door, he would press warmly my hand, and, thanking me for the message of grace I had just given to my flock, he would say, with an expressive smile :

‘ What if to-day *my bell* has rung for the last time ? ’







